

APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

Religion-Based Trivia Board Game and Method of Playing

Field of the Invention

[0001] The invention relates to trivia board games, and more particularly to educational trivia board games that include questions regarding religions.

Background of the Invention

[0002] Conventional trivia games provide a source of entertainment where players must correctly answer trivia questions to win a game. One popular game of this type is Trivial Pursuit®, where teams of players attempt to correctly answer trivia questions so they can advance their game token along a path on a game board. As the Internet website for Trivial Pursuit® states, the questions cover a broad range of topics, from "Was Humpty Dumpty pushed?" to "What modern day animal is related to the prehistoric merychippus?" Trivia games of this type have been known for quite some time.

[0003] While conventional trivia games provide a source of entertainment, the involvement of players during the game is limited because for most of the questions, only one person or team will have an opportunity to provide an answer. This is problematic because some players may lose interest in what is going on until it is their turn once again, especially if they are playing as a team. This limited involvement of players can also result in a waste of knowledge, because knowledge held by a person or a team that is related to questions asked to opponents is generally of no use.

[0004] Furthermore, while conventional trivia games can fortuitously impart some new knowledge on players, there are no mechanisms to reinforce or encourage this learning. Such games are really designed to test the knowledge of a person or team and are not specifically designed to educate while providing entertainment. For example, because limited involvement may cause some

players to lose interest in what is going on until it is their turn, these players are exposed to less questions and facts. This detracts from any learning that could occur.

[0005] In addition to these drawbacks, there are few conventional trivia games on the market that include questions relating to religion. The few that do exist only include questions relating to one specific religion, such as Christianity or Judaism. Because the questions are limited to one religion, these trivia games have limited market appeal. The primary consumers of such trivia games will be members of that specific faith, and this obviously excludes a huge segment of the market. Furthermore, these games are not going to be marketed as "party" games because parties generally include people from a variety of religious backgrounds. Trivia games with questions covering just one faith can really only be played when people of the same faith come together.

[0006] Accordingly, there is a need for a novel religion-based trivia game that can be entertaining yet educational, that can provide mechanisms to reinforce the educational aspects, that can provide more active involvement for players, and that can have broad appeal despite its religious nature to reach a larger segment of the trivia game market.

Summary of the Invention

[0007] The invention is a trivia game and method of playing that includes questions covering a plurality of religions. The game is played on a game board having a game path, and players advance tokens along the game path as they correctly answer trivia questions. The questions can be from any of a number of religions, including but not limited to Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Baha'i Faith, Confucianism, Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, and Vodun (i.e., Voodoo). In one implementation, the game can cover a subset of the above listed religions, the subset including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and the New Religious Movement. In one implementation, the trivia game includes one or more mechanisms to encourage and reinforce learning facts about religions, and to provide continuous involvement of players during the game.

Description of the Drawings

[0008] Figure 1 is an illustration of a game board.

[0009] Figure 2 is a method for playing a trivia game that includes questions for a plurality of religions with a debate mechanism.

[0010] Figure 3 is a method for playing a trivia game that includes questions for a plurality of religions with a religious action mechanism.

[0011] Figure 4 is a method for playing a trivia game that includes questions for a plurality of religions with both debate and religious action mechanisms.

Detailed Description

[0012] The invention is a trivia game that includes questions covering a broad range of religions. The questions can be from any of a number of religions, including but not limited to Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Baha'i Faith, Confucianism, Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroaster, and Vodun (i.e., Voodoo). In one implementation, the game can cover a subset of the above listed religions, the subset including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and the New Religious Movements.

[0013] In an implementation, the trivia game can further include questions relating to one or more categories of religions, such as eastern religions, classical paganism, and prehistoric religions. The eastern religion category can include some of the religions mentioned above, such as Sikhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Jainism, and Zoroaster. The classical paganism category can include subjects such as Greek gods, Egyptian gods, Roman gods, Persian gods, and Scandinavian gods. The prehistoric religion category can include subjects such as Shamanism, Native American religions, African religions, Central and South American religions, Australian religions, New Zealand religions, and Pacific Island religions. In other implementations of the invention, questions covering other religions or categories can be used.

[0014] The invention can include mechanisms to encourage and reinforce learning facts about religions, and to provide continuous involvement of players

during the game. In one implementation, the trivia game can include a debate mechanism that encourages player participation and increases player involvement. When a player or team responds to a question, the debate mechanism enables the opposing player or team to challenge whatever answer was given. The opposing player or team can also provide what they believe to be the correct answer. If the original answer was correct, the opposing player or team that challenged the original answer can be penalized. If the original answer was incorrect, the opposing player or team can be rewarded. In addition, if the opposing player or team provided an answer that is correct, the opposing player or team can be further rewarded.

[0015] The debate mechanism encourages players to pay attention not only to questions they are asked, but also to questions asked of the opposing player or team because they may be able to use the debate mechanism to take advantage of their opponent's mistakes. This increased player participation furthers any learning that occurs. The debate mechanism also reinforces what is learned because when a player or team challenges their opponent, they will think hard about the question and possible answer. If the challenge fails, the penalty associated with the failed challenge will tend to underscore the correct answer in the mind of the player or team.

[0016] In another implementation, a trivia game constructed in accordance with the invention can include a religious action mechanism to increase the educational value of the game. At certain predetermined points in the game, a player or team will be required to perform one or more religious actions that embody a particular religion. These religious actions give a player or team more insight into a particular religion, and because the player or team has to actually perform the actions, the religious actions will make a more memorable impression.

[0017] One religious action included in the trivia game for the players to perform can be related to Buddhism. In one implementation of the Buddhism action, a player must begin by standing in a location where there is approximately three to five feet of open space in front of them. The player places their hands

together in a prayer position just over their head and then brings their hands down to a location proximate their forehead. From there, the player moves their hands, still in the prayer position, to a location proximate their chest. Next, the player drops to the floor on their knees and moves their hands to a location on the floor proximate their knees. The hands no longer need be in the prayer position and are preferably on the floor facing palms down. The player then bows down and touches their forehead to the floor. Finally, the player stands up and repeats this series of motions a plurality of times. In one implementation, a player will complete this series of motions three times.

[0018] Another religious action included in the trivia game can be an action related to Hinduism. In one implementation, the Hinduism action begins with a player sitting on the floor with their legs crossed. In other implementations, the player can have their legs in a half-lotus or a full-lotus position. Next, the player lays their hands on their knees with their palms facing upward, away from the knees. For each hand, the player is required to touch their middle finger to their thumb. The player must then close their eyes, inhale, and chant the word "om" as they exhale. The chant must be performed a plurality of times, preferably at least three times.

[0019] Yet another religious action that can be included in the trivia game is an action associated with Christianity. One implementation of the Christianity action can be performed by genuflecting as the player exits and then returns to the room in which the game is being played. In this implementation, the player is required to go to an entrance of the room in which the trivia game is being played. The player then turns to face the interior of the room and motions as if they are dipping their right middle finger into an imaginary dish of water placed to the right of the player. The player then touches this middle finger to their forehead while bowing. In one implementation, the bowing is performed by bending the players left knee while sweeping their right leg behind. The player, while still bowing, then touches their right middle finger to their chest, then to the left shoulder, and then to the right shoulder. The player then stands up, turns around, and exits the room. Next, the player repeats this entire series of motions

from outside the room in order to reenter. In other implementations, the player can reenter without repeating all of these motions.

[0020] Another religious action that can be included in the trivia game is an action associated with Islam. In one implementation, the Islam action can be performed by a player turning in circles to the right and slowly chanting a plurality of names of Allah. After turning a predetermined number of times, the player must turn in circles to the left while again chanting a plurality of names of Allah. In one implementation, a player only chants three names of Allah and turns five times in each direction. In other implementations, a player can chant anywhere from one to ninety-nine names of Allah and turn the necessary number of times required to chant all of the names.

[0021] Another religious action that can be included in the invention can be related to Judaism. In one implementation of the Judaism action, a player first stands at a table and lights a candle that is placed on the table. If no candle is available, in one implementation a player can pretend to light an imaginary candle. Next, the player raises their arms out to the sides about shoulder height and turns their palms to face the light. The player then motions as if to gather the light up with their hands and pretend to pull the light to their eyes, thereby moving their hands over their eyes. This series of motions is repeated three times, and on the third series, the player's hands are held over their eyes for approximately thirty seconds.

[0022] Figure 1 illustrates one implementation of a game board 100 upon which a trivia game constructed in accordance with the invention can be played. The game board 100 includes a plurality of spaces 102 that form a path along the perimeter of the game board 100. Players can advance game tokens (not shown) along the spaces 102 of this path as they play the game. When a player lands on a space 102, they are asked a question based on a religion associated with the space 102 they have landed on. The spaces 102 are divided into two different sets associated with different types of questions. There are specific religion sets 104 and religious category sets 106.

[0023] Each specific religion set 104 consists of a series of spaces 102 associated with one specific religion. For example, one specific religion set 104 can be associated with questions about Christianity, while another specific religion set 104 can be associated with questions about Judaism. In one implementation, there are six specific religion sets 104 on the game board 100, and therefore six religions can be used in the game. In an implementation, these six religions can be Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and the New Religious Movement.

[0024] The religious category sets 106 consist of a series of spaces 102 associated with a religious category rather than one specific religion. The religious categories are broader than the specific religions and can encompass questions covering a variety of different religions. The religions used in the religious category sets 106 tend to be different from the religions covered by the specific religion sets 104. This enables the invention to include an even broader range of religions. In one implementation, the religious categories can be prehistoric, paganism, and eastern. In the implementation of the game board 100 shown in Figure 1, there are six religious category sets 106. In such an implementation, there can be two religious category sets 106 for prehistoric religions, two religious category sets 106 for paganism, and two religious category sets 106 for eastern religions.

[0025] The game board 100 shown in Figure 1 also includes an interior path 108 that is formed using a plurality of spaces 102. During a game, when a player completes the perimeter path formed by the specific religion sets 104 and the religious category sets 106, the player can then move to this interior path 108, starting at space 112. In one implementation, the spaces 102 that form the interior path 108 are not associated with any specific religion; rather, the spaces 102 on the interior path 108 can be associated with a number of religions. The questions asked of players landing on the spaces 102 of the interior path 108 can include quotes from well-known leaders or philosophers. In one implementation, a player must complete this interior path 108 after completing the perimeter path to win the game.

[0026] The game board 100 also includes a plurality of religious action spaces 110. When a player lands on a religious action space 110, the player is required to perform a religious action, as described above. In one implementation, when a player lands on a religious action space 110, the player also loses their turn.

[0027] In addition to the game board 100, the invention can include game tokens (not shown) to represent players as they move along the spaces 102, and can include a plurality of religion-based trivia cards (not shown) that have religion-based questions and answers printed on them. The invention can also include at least one die (not shown) that a player can roll to determine how many spaces 102 they can advance on their turn. In one implementation, the die is a six-sided die that has the numbers one through six printed on the faces of the die. In another implementation, the die can be a six-sided die that includes the number one printed on two faces of the die, the number two printed on two faces of the die, the number three printed on one face of the die, and the numbers three and six printed on one face of the die. If a player rolls the face showing the three and six, the player has choice of moving either three or six spaces. In other implementations, alternate dies known in the art can be used, and two or more dies can be used.

[0028] It should be noted that as used herein, the term "player" can refer to a single player or a team of players, and the term "team" can refer to a team composed of just one player or a team composed of a plurality of players. As such, use of the word "player" herein should not be interpreted differently from use of the word "team" herein.

[0029] Figure 2 is a method of playing a trivia game according to an implementation of the invention, where the trivia game includes both religion-based questions and a debate mechanism. The method of Figure 2 can be played using the game board 100 shown in Figure 1, or any other game board that includes the necessary elements described herein. In this implementation, the trivia game is played by two teams and the teams decide which team goes first. This can be done by having each team roll a die with the team rolling a higher number going first. The team that goes first becomes the "playing team,"

while the other team becomes the "opposing team." The playing team chooses a space 102 along the perimeter path to start their journey along the perimeter of the game board 100. In one implementation, the team must travel around the perimeter path and return to their chosen starting space 102 before they are allowed to move to the interior path 108.

[0030] In the implementation shown in Figure 2, the opposing team asks the playing team a religion-based question (step 200). The religion can be any of a broad range of religions and is determined by which space 102 the playing team is on, because each space 102 is associated with a religion. For instance, if the playing team is on a space 102 associated with Hinduism, the playing team is asked a Hinduism-based question. If the space 102 is associated with a religious category (i.e., the space is in a religious category set 106), the question comes from that religious category. The religion-based questions are printed on trivia cards and the opposing team selects one trivia card from the appropriate religion set of cards or category set of cards to read the question to the playing team. The question can take on any form, including but not limited to multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, true-false, or the question can just be a free-form question. Once the question is asked, the playing team provides an answer (step 202).

[0031] After the playing team provides an answer, the players determine whether the playing team is on a space 102 that includes a debate mechanism (step 204). In the implementation of Figure 2, at least one of the spaces 102 on the game board 100 includes a debate mechanism. In some implementations, only some of the spaces 102 include a debate mechanism, while in other implementations all of the spaces 102 include a debate mechanism. For example, in one implementation of the invention, half of the spaces 102 within a specific religion set 104 can include a debate mechanism. Accordingly, each specific religious set 104 on the game board 100 will have six spaces 102 that include a debate mechanism and six spaces 102 that do not.

[0032] If the playing team is on a space 102 that does not include a debate mechanism, the opposing team retrieves the correct answer to the asked

question from the trivia card (step 206) and determines whether the answer provided by the playing team is correct (step 210). If the playing team is correct, the playing team retains its turn by rolling the die and advancing their game token the number of spaces 102 shown on the die (step 212). The method described in Figure 2 is then repeated starting with the playing team being asked a religion-based question, where the religion is again determined by which space 102 the playing team has landed on (step 200). On the other hand, if the playing team is incorrect, the playing team loses its turn (step 213) and the opposing team becomes the playing team (step 214).

[0033] If the playing team is on a space 102 that includes a debate mechanism, after they have answered the religion-based question, the opposing team must decide whether they are going to challenge the answer given by the playing team (step 208). If the opposing team decides not to challenge the playing team's answer, the game proceeds as if the space 102 did not have a debate mechanism. In other words, the opposing team checks the answer (step 206), determines if the playing team is correct (210), and the playing team either rolls the die to move (step 212) or loses their turn (step 214), depending on whether they are correct or not.

[0034] If the opposing team does decide to challenge the answer provided by the playing team, the opposing team provides their own answer to the trivia question (step 216). Next, one of the teams retrieves the correct answer to the asked question from the trivia card (step 218) and determines whether the answer provided by the playing team is correct (step 220).

[0035] If the playing team is correct on the challenged question, the game penalizes the opposing team for their failed challenge by retreating their game token back one space (step 222). The game also rewards the playing team for surviving the challenge by advancing their game token one space (step 224). The playing team then retains its turn by rolling the die and advancing the number of spaces 102 shown on the die (step 225). As before, the method described in Figure 2 is then repeated with the playing team being asked a

religion-based question from a religion associated with the space 102 they have landed on (step 200).

[0036] If the playing team is incorrect on the challenged question, the playing team loses their turn (step 226) and the game rewards the opposing team for their successful challenge by advancing their game token one space (step 228). In addition, if the answer provided by the opposing team during the challenge was correct, the game rewards the opposing team once again by advancing their game token one more space (step 232). It is now the opposing team's turn, and the opposing team becomes the playing team (step 214). In another implementation, the game can also penalize the playing team for the incorrect answer on the challenged question, for example, by retreating their game token one space.

[0037] Figure 3 is a method of playing a trivia game according to an implementation of the invention, where the trivia game includes both religion-based questions and a religious action mechanism. The method of Figure 3 is played using the game board 100 shown in Figure 1, or another implementation of a game board that has the necessary elements as described herein. The game board 100 includes a plurality of religious action spaces 110 to enable the religious action mechanism. In this implementation, the trivia game is played by two teams and the teams decide which team goes first. As described above, this can be done by having each team roll a die with the team rolling a higher number going first: The team that goes first becomes the "playing team," while the other team becomes the "opposing team." The playing team chooses a space 102 along the perimeter path to start their journey along the perimeter of the game board 100. In one implementation, the team must travel around the perimeter path and return to their chosen starting space 102 before they are allowed to move to the interior path 108.

[0038] In the implementation shown in Figure 3, the playing team is asked a religion-based question (step 300). Again, the religion is determined based on which space 102 the playing team is on. The religion-based questions are printed on trivia cards and the opposing team selects one trivia card from the

appropriate religion or category set to read the question to the playing team. Once the question is asked, the playing team provides an answer (step 302).

[0039] Next, the opposing team retrieves the correct answer to the religion-based question from the trivia card (step 304) and determines whether the answer provided by the playing team is correct (step 306). If the playing team is incorrect, the playing team loses its turn (step 314) and the opposing team becomes the playing team (step 316).

[0040] If, however, the playing team is correct, the playing team retains its turn by rolling the die and advancing their game token the number of spaces 102 shown on the die (step 308). After the game token is advanced, the players determine whether the game token has landed on a religious-action space 110 (step 310). If the playing team did not land on a religious-action space 110, the method of Figure 3 is repeated starting with the playing team being asked a religion-based question associated with the space 102 they have landed on (step 300).

[0041] If the playing team has landed on a religious action space 110, the game requires all members of the team to perform a religious action (step 312). As described above, in an implementation of the invention, these religious actions can include a Buddhism action, a Hinduism action, a Christianity action, an Islam action, and a Judaism action. The playing team also loses their turn (step 314) and the opposing team now becomes the playing team (step 316).

[0042] Figure 4 is a method of playing a trivia game according to an implementation of the invention, where the trivia game includes religion-based questions and both a debate mechanism and a religious action mechanism. The method of Figure 4 is played using the game board 100 shown in Figure 1, and the game board 100 includes a plurality of religious action spaces 110. Again, other implementations of the game board are possible as long as the game board includes the elements described herein. In the implementation of Figure 4, the trivia game is played by two teams and the teams decide which team goes first. The team that goes first becomes the "playing team," while the other team becomes the "opposing team." The playing team chooses a space

102 along the perimeter path to start their journey along the perimeter of the game board 100. In one implementation, the team must travel around the perimeter path and return to their chosen starting space 102 before they are allowed to move to the interior path 108.

[0043] In the implementation shown in Figure 4, the opposing team asks the playing team a religion-based question (step 400). The religion is determined by which space 102 the playing team is on, as each space 102 is associated with a religion. If the space 102 is associated with a religious category (e.g., paganism, prehistoric, or eastern), the religion-based question comes from that category. The religion-based questions are printed on trivia cards and the opposing team selects one trivia card from the appropriate religion card set or category card set to read the question to the playing team. After the question is asked by the opposing team, the playing team provides an answer (step 402).

[0044] After the playing team provides an answer, the players check to see if the playing team is on a space 102 that includes a debate mechanism (step 404). In the implementation of Figure 4, each specific religious set 104 on the game board 100 has six spaces 102 that include a debate mechanism and six spaces 102 that do not. In other implementations, some or all of the spaces 102 can include a debate mechanism.

[0045] If the playing team is on a space 102 that does not include a debate mechanism, the opposing team retrieves the correct answer to the asked question from the trivia card (step 406) and determines whether the answer provided by the playing team is correct (step 410). If the playing team is incorrect, the playing team loses its turn (step 418) and the opposing team becomes the playing team (step 420).

[0046] If the playing team is correct, however, the playing team retains its turn by rolling the die and advancing their game token the number of spaces 102 shown on the die (step 412). When the game token is advanced, the players determine whether the game token has landed on a religious-action space 110 (step 414). If the playing team did not land on a religious-action space 110, the method described in Figure 4 is then repeated starting with the playing team being asked

a religion-based question based on which space 102 the playing team has landed on (step 400).

[0047] If the playing team does land on a religious action space 110, the game requires that all members of the team perform a religious action (step 416). As described above, in an implementation of the invention, these religious actions can include a Buddhism action, a Hinduism action, a Christianity action, an Islam action, and a Judaism action. The playing team also loses their turn (step 418) and the opposing team now becomes the playing team (step 420).

[0048] Returning now to step 404, if the playing team is on a space 102 that includes a debate mechanism, after they have answered the religion-based question, the opposing team must decide whether they are going to challenge the answer given by the playing team (step 408). If the opposing team decides not to challenge the playing team's answer, the game proceeds as if the space 102 did not have a debate mechanism. Accordingly, the opposing team then checks the answer provided by the playing team (step 406), determines if the playing team is correct (410), and the playing team either rolls the die to move (step 412) or loses their turn (step 418), depending on whether their answer was correct or not.

[0049] If the opposing team decides to challenge the answer provided by the playing team, the opposing team provides their own answer to the trivia question (step 422). Next, one of the teams retrieves the correct answer to the religion-based question from the trivia card (step 424) and determines whether the answer provided by the playing team is correct (step 426).

[0050] If the playing team is correct on the challenged question, the game penalizes the opposing team for their failed challenge by moving their game token back one space (step 428) and the game rewards the playing team by advancing their game token one space (step 430). After the playing team has advanced one space, the players determine whether the playing team has landed on a religious-action space 110 (step 431).

[0051] If the playing team did not land on a religious action space 110 after moving forward one space, the playing team rolls the die and advances the number of spaces 102 shown on the die (step 412). After advancing the game token, the players have to again determine whether the token has landed on a religious-action space 110 (step 414).

[0052] If the playing team has landed on religious-action space 110, either after advancing one space due to the failed challenge (steps 430 and 431) or after rolling the die and moving (step 412 and 414), the game requires that all members of the team perform a religious action (step 416). The playing team also loses their turn (step 418) and the opposing team now becomes the playing team (step 420).

[0053] If the playing team does not land on a religious-action space 110 after rolling the die, the method described in Figure 4 is then repeated starting with the playing team being asked a religion-based question based on which space 102 the playing team has advanced to (step 400).

[0054] Returning to step 426, if the playing team is incorrect on the challenged question, the playing team loses their turn (step 432) and the game rewards the opposing team for their successful challenge by advancing the opposing team's game token one space (step 434). The players then determine whether the answer provided by the opposing team is correct (step 436). If the answer was indeed correct, the game rewards the opposing team once more by advancing their game token an additional space (step 438). It is now the opposing team's turn, and the opposing team now becomes the playing team (step 420).

[0055] If the opposing team's game token should land on a religious action space 110 after it is finished being rewarded, then the game requires that all members of the team perform a religious action and the playing team retains its turn.

[0056] The invention has been described with reference to specific implementations. Other implementations of the invention will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. For example, in one implementation, the trivia

game can be played by three or more teams. In such an implementation, the debate mechanism can be modified to resolve situations where two or more opposing teams wish to challenge the playing team. If multiple teams challenge the answer of the playing team, they can either provide the same answer or a different answer. If the challenge is successful, the challenging team with the correct answer can become the next playing team. If neither challenging team provides the correct answer, or if all the challenging teams provide the same answer, the challenging teams can roll the die to determine which team becomes the next playing team. It is, therefore, intended that the scope of the invention not be limited to the implementations described herein.